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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Reserve

FAMINE REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT

This report of the Hoover Mission
was delivered to President Truman
May 13, 1946. The report includes
a statement from the mission with
supporting tables of cereal require-
ments and supplies.

May 1946



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Washington, D. C.
May 13, 1946

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

We have completed your instructions to survey the principal nations affected by food shortages which have resulted, or may result, in widespread famine; to evaluate the minimum needs of these areas until the next harvest; and to discover such additional food resources as possible. In accordance with your instructions, we have also presented the American point of view on the food problem to these nations and the interest and understanding of our people in their plight. Finally, we have constantly advised American officials and the American public as to the situation as we found it.

We have traveled some 35,000 miles, visited twenty-two countries which have a deficiency of food, and informed ourselves of the situation in several others. The only country of large reported deficiency we did not visit was the Union of South Africa. We visited five self-sufficient or surplus countries and informed ourselves of the situation in other consequential surplus nations.

The dominant need of the world in this crisis is cereals, particularly wheat and rice. There is great need of fats and special food for children, but as cereals can furnish 85 per cent of an emergency diet, we considered cereal requirements were the first concern, and the best indicator. If a foundation of bread can be assured, and as much fats and children's food as possible, mass starvation can be prevented.

At the time of our departure, the Combined Food Board's estimate of the available cereal supplies from surplus countries showed a deficit as compared with stated requirements of 11,000,000 tons, or 43 per cent.

REQUIREMENTS - We attach hereto (Table I) a country-by country, month-by-month minimum program of required cereal imports to the deficit and famine areas from May 1st to September 30th.

These programs represent a considerable reduction from the hitherto stated requirements of the various nations. The amounts have in most cases been agreed upon by their governments. In the case of China, we regret to say our program is less than minimum need but is all, or more, than can be transported inland to the famine areas. The totals are:

Europe	8,390,000 tons
Latin America	1,000,000 tons
South Africa and	
New Zealand	198,000 tons
Middle East	100,000 tons
Indian Ocean area	2,886,000 tons
Pacific Ocean area	1,910,000 tons
Total	14,484,000 tons

Of course, every country would be better off if more could be furnished.

(more)

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SUPPLIES

We have found some increases in supplies possible during the crisis through development of certain new sources of supply; through additional loans of cereals from early-crop countries which may not themselves have annual surpluses; through substitution of other cereals for wheat and rice; and as a result of conservation up to this time.

Our estimate (Table II) of Probable Supplies as of May 1st to September 30th are:

From	
United States	4,220,000 tons
Canada	2,300,000 tons
Australia	992,000 tons
United Kingdom	1,200,000 tons
Argentine	2,375,000 tons
Brazil	200,000 tons
Other Western Hemisphere States	40,000 tons
Burma	75,000 tons
Siam	195,000 tons
Russia to France	300,000 tons
TOTAL 10,897,000 tons	

Therefore the gap in supplies between May 1st and September 30th can be reduced to about 3,600,000 tons, as against an 11,000,000 tons gap in the earlier appraisals.

In addition to the above supplies there is a "possible" about 1,500,000 tons more, as indicated in Table III.

We are confident that if until the end of August, there can be further vigorous conservation in surplus countries, mainly wheats and fats, and more energetic cooperation between nations, the remaining deficit can be largely overcome. The cooperation of Russia and the Latin American States would greatly aid in meeting the problem. If mass starvation is to be prevented it will require constant effort.

It is of interest to note that the quantities which are provided by UNRRA as charity comprise about 20 per cent of the world's cereal needs, whereas nations representing 80 percent are being financed by the importing countries themselves. But the need in these latter is no less urgent.

You will recognize that these statements are estimates. They, however, comprise a reasonable basis upon which to formulate policies.

We wish to express our especial appreciation of the unfailing aid and courtesy of the Secretaries of Agriculture, State and War, and the American officials abroad. We are also deeply indebted to Generals George and Saville of the Air Transport Command, their efficient crews, and for their provisions for our comfort and safety.

Yours faithfully,

HERBERT HOOVER
D. A. FITZGERALD
HUGH GIBSON

W. HALLAM TUCK
PERRIN C. GALPIN
MAURICE PATE

(more)

USDA 1064-46-2

TABLE I

CEREAL REQUIREMENTS (including Rice)

EUROPE

* Visited by the Mission

MINIMUM ARRIVALS REQUIRED DURING CRISIS PERIOD

(Loadings at seaboard about 30 days earlier)

Based on not to exceed 300 grams cereals per person per day

Country	Population Millions	(Thousands of Tons)					Total
		May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	
* France	39.1	350	350	350	350	350	1,750
* No. Africa	12.0	100	-	-	-	-	100
* Italy	41.5	225	225	225	100	-	775
* Switzerland	4.2	-	-	30	30	30	90
* Czechoslovakia	13.5	60	60	60	60	50	290
* Poland	23.5	85	85	85	85	-	340
* Finland	3.8	-	-	25	40	40	105
* Norway	3.0	-	-	-	30	30	60
* United Kingdom	47.5	400	400	400	400	400	2,000
* Belgium	8.0	60	60	60	60	60	300
* Holland	9.0	-	-	-	-	80	80
* Germany:							
Am. Zone	18.0	50	50	50	65	60	275
Br. Zone	23.3	180	180	180	180	180	900
Fr. Zone	6.0	30	45	45	45	30	195
Russ. Zone				Data unknown			
* Austria	7.0	30	55	55	55	30	225
Spain	26.0	60	60	60	60	-	240
Portugal	8.0	30	30	30	30	-	120
Albania	1.0	5	5	5	5	-	20
* Yugoslavia	16.0	50	50	50	50	50	250
* Greece	7.5	55	55	55	55	55	275
EUROPE TOTALS	317.9	1,770	1,710	1,765	1,700	1,445	8,390

LATIN AMERICA

Latin-America	200	200	200	200	200	1,000
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NEW ZEALAND AND SOUTH AFRICA

New Zealand	-	9	9	0	0	18
South Africa	40	40	40	30	30	180
	40	49	49	30	30	198

NEAR EAST

Near East	20	20	20	20	20	100
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TABLE I - continued
 * Visited by the Mission
 INDIAN OCEAN

(Loadings from Eastern Hemisphere 1 month and Western Hemisphere 2 months earlier)

Country or Province	Population Millions	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Total
* INDIA (Provinces affected)							
Bombay	22.0	-	55	85	95	95	330
Mysore	7.6	14	25	25	25	25	114
Madras	51.4	210	170	170	170	170	890
Trav..	6.5	18	10	10	10	10	58
Cochin	1.5	8	7	7	7	7	36
Deccan	2.9	43	19	19	19	19	119
Behar	37.9	19	14	20	20	20	93
Un. Provinces	57.6	24	-	-	60	60	144
Bengal	61.3	-	-	90	106	106	302
Other	50	50	50	50	50	50	250
Ceylon	7.0	60	60	60	60	60	300
Malaya & Straits Settlements	3.6	50	50	50	50	50	250
TOTAL		496	460	586	672	672	2,886
PACIFIC OCEAN							
* Philippines	14.0	12	12	12	12	12	60
* China 1/	220.0	120	150	200	200	200	870
* Japan	75.0	50	250	270	200	100	870
* Korea 2/	14.0	15	30	45	10	10	110
		197	442	527	422	322	1,910
GRAND TOTAL		2,723	2,881	3,147	3,044	2,689	14,484

SURPLUS OR SELF-SUFFICIENT COUNTRIES

* Sweden	6.2	-	-	-	-	-	-
* Denmark	3.8	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hungary	9.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rumania	12.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bulgaria	6.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
* Egypt	17.3	-	-	-	-	-	-
* Iraq	4.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
* Siam	14.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	73.0	-	-	-	-	-	-

1/ Utmost capacity of inland trans.

2/ American Zone

(more)

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TABLE II

POSSIBLE WORLD CEREAL SUPPLIES FROM SURPLUS AREAS (May 1 to Sept. 30)

	Second Quarter Loadings (April, May, June)			Loadings in July and August			Total
	Coarse			Coarse			
	Wheat	grains	Rice	Wheat	grains	Rice	
U.S.A.	2,200	500	20	1,400	100	-	4,220
Canada	1,650	150	-	400	100	-	2,300
Australia	700	-	17	275	-	-	992
United Kingdom	200	-	-	-	-	-	200
Argentine	500	800	-	275	800	-	2,375
Brazil	-	50	60	-	50	40	200
Other Western Hemisphere States	-	-	40	-	-	-	40
Burma	-	-	40	-	-	35	75
Siam	-	-	75	-	-	120	195
Russia to France	150	-	-	150	-	-	300
	<u>5,400</u>	<u>1,500</u>	<u>252</u>	<u>2,500</u>	<u>1,050</u>	<u>195</u>	<u>10,897</u>
GRAND TOTAL: (Wheat - 7,900; Coarse grains - 2,550; Rice - 447)							10,897

TABLE III

FURTHER SUPPLIES POSSIBLE

	Second quarter loadings (April-May-June)			Loadings in July and August			Total	Remarks
	Coarse			Coarse				
	Wheat	grains	Rice	Wheat	grains	Rice		
Indo-China	-	-	50	-	-	50	50	
Iraq	-	125	-	-	100	-	225	
India	-	-	-	-	200	-	200	Surplus Provinces
Punjab and Sind	100	-	-	100	-	-	200	Could be borrowed
Egypt	30	-	10	50	-	25	115	Could be borrowed
United Kingdom	300	-	-	-	-	-	300	Released stocks
Russia to France	75	-	-	-	-	-	75	
Siam	-	-	-	-	-	200	200	
	<u>505</u>	<u>125</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>225</u>	<u>1,365</u>	
Iraq (dates)							<u>140</u>	
							<u>1,505</u>	

(more)

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TABLE IV

PROVISIONAL BALANCE SHEET OF WORLD REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPLIES
(000 tons)

MINIMUM CEREAL REQUIREMENTS

Europe	8,390
Latin-America	1,000
Southern British Empire	198
Middle East	100
Indian Ocean	2,886
Pacific Ocean	1,910
	14,484

CEREAL SUPPLIES PROBABLE

April-May-June Loadings	7,202
July-August Loadings	3,695
	10,897
DEFICIT PROBABLE	3,587 tons or 24 percent
Further possible cereal supplies	1,505

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TABLE V

COMPARISON OF THE COMBINED FOOD BOARD BALANCE SHEET OF MARCH 1, 1946 (retrospective to January 1, 1946) AND HOOVER MISSION BALANCE SHEET
AS OF MAY 1st, 1946

(000 tons)

	Stated Requirements	Estimated Supplies	Deficit	Deficit p.c.
<u>Combined Food Board</u>				
Jan. 1 - Sept. 1	25,900	14,900	11,000	.42.5%
Shipments to May 1	7,000	7,000		
<u>Original Balance</u>				
as at May 1	18,900	7,900	11,000	58%
<u>As Revised by Hoover Mission:</u>				
May 1 - Sept. 1	14,484	10,900	3,587	24%
	- 4,000	- 3,000	- 7,413	

Thus, the requirements were revised downward by 4,000,000 tons and the Supplies revised upward, through new sources developed, effect of conservation, drafts on earlier crops in some countries, etc., 3,000,000 tons

The estimated gap as of May 1st 3,600,000 tons

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